



The *Columbia* and the *Lady Washington*, drawn by Robert Haswell and the front-piece to his *A Voyage Round the World Onboard the Ship COLUMBIA-REDIVIVA and Sloop [Lady] WASHINGTON* (1801?)

THE BOSTONIANS AMONG THE NATIVES

Vignettes and Descriptions from the *Columbia* Trade Expeditions: 1787-90 & 1790-93.

“...The sea letters from Congress and this State you will also show on every proper occasion; and although we expect you will treat all nations with respect and civility, yet we depend you will suffer no insult and injury from none without showing that spirit which will ever become A FREE AND INDEPENDENT AMERICA.”

~ From orders given Capt. John Kendrick of the ship *Columbia* by its owners; headed by Joseph Barrell and Charles Bulfinch.

Telling the tale of which European and American explorers first discovered, claimed, and charted the Pacific Northwest region and Alaska is no simple matter. Britain, Russia, the U.S., and Spain all had their share in the great discoveries. Of the individual explorers, and aside from the celebrated Capt. Cook (and who in 1778 preceded his British counterparts to the Pacific Northwest¹), Capt. George Vancouver has tended, and with good reason, to walk away with the loftiest palms; his voyages being particularly notable for both their thoroughness of geographical extent *and* accuracy of mapping. But really it was the Spaniards, such as captains Don Bruno Heceta, Don Juan de Ayala, Don Juan de la Bodega y Quadra, and Don Manuel Quimper, who initially beat everyone else, including Cook, to the punch in that region. As a writer in *The North American Review* of Jan. 1839, No. CII, pp. 136-137, in an article titled “Nautical Discovery in the Northwest,” relates:

¹ Sir Francis Drake and Sir Thomas Cavendish had sailed along and touched on the shores of California and Oregon in the late 16th century, but *not* modern day Washington and British Columbia. It was Cook, incidentally, who first took grave exception to the claims of Juan de Fuca for the straits bearing that Greco-Spanish navigator’s name. Yet his skepticism could be ascribed as much, if not more, to an understandable desire on his part to protect British national interests than any substantial counter proof to de Fuca’s assertion. Even so and to this day, it is common for some, and with no more argument than Cook had (namely that de Fuca was off in his reckoning by one degree of latitude), to summarily adopt his perhaps too absolute line of interpretation.

“In 1788, two Spanish vessels, commanded by Don Esteban Martinez and Don Gonzalo Lopez de Haro, sailed from San Blas [Mexico] to examine the Russian establishments in America; and, in 1799, Martinez proceeded with the same vessels for the purpose of making a settlement in Nootka Sound [in Vancouver Island], and constructed the fort of San Miguel on one of the islands there. Two months after this, arrived the English ship Argonaut, fitted out by a new trading corporation in England, called ‘King George’s Sound Company,’ which, in the grasping and rapacious spirit that has actuated the East India Company and the Hudson’s Bay Company, pretended to monopolize to itself the trade and territory of Nootka Sound. Martinez demanded by what right England undertook to do this. Colnet, the commander of the Argonaut, referred to Cook’s voyage. Martinez very justly replied, that he himself, under Perez, had anticipated Cook, in the discovery of Nootka Sound, by four years; a fact well remembered by the natives, who had a perfect recollection of Martinez personally, and of the expedition of Perez. At length, Martinez put an end to the dispute by arresting Colnet, and sending him to San Bias. At the same time, other vessels, commanded by Don Francisco Elisa and Don Salvador Fidalgo, were sent from Mexico to support Martinez. Fidalgo formed a second Spanish settlement or fort to the southeast of Quadra’s [i.e., Vancouver] Island, on the main land, at the entrance of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, in latitude 48° 20’ N. This fact is important to be remembered. For we thus see, that Spain was the first European power that doubled Cape Mendocino and Cape Blanco, the first that visited the river of Aguilar, the first that discovered the inlet of Columbia River, the first that visited Nootka Sound, the first that discovered the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and *the first that formed any establishment, on any part of the northwest coast, from California to the forty-ninth degree of north latitude.* Hers is the prior title to that of England, both by discovery and by settlement.

“Meanwhile, the seizure of Colnet had excited a very lively sensation in Europe, and well-nigh involved Britain and Spain in a new war. This was the celebrated Nootka Sound controversy; a diplomatic question, into which we do not propose to enter at present; which controversy being disposed of by a convention between Great Britain and Spain, the design, previously conceived by the British government, to have a more careful survey of the northwest coast, was resumed, and intrusted to Vancouver. His exertions were meritorious and valuable. Not, however, that he made any new discovery of *national* consequence, but that he followed up successfully those of others, and accurately reconnoitred an extensive region. This was done during the years 1792, 1793, and 1794.”

The same article furnishes a comprehensive and thoughtful account and examination of practically all the known early voyages by Europeans and Americans to the Pacific Northwest, and for this reason is worth learning from and consulting on the subject. At the time it was written and for decades afterward, many of the Canadian-U.S. boundary disputes had yet to be resolved; so that the question of who discovered what and when still had considerable political relevance.

The United States, compared to Spain and Britain, was a relative late comer to Northwest maritime exploration, yet the story is in its way nonetheless also a dramatic and exciting one. Doubtless, the most decisive discovery the Americans made was Capt.

Robert Gray's finding and naming the Columbia River in May 1792 (during the second voyage of the Columbia to the N.W.);² which along with the subsequent Lewis and Clark expedition, this latter aided by the peace providing (and hence life saving) Sacajewea, laid the foundation for U.S. territorial claims in the area.

There remains some question whether Captain John Kendrick (c.1740-1794) and Robert Gray (1755-1806) actually were the first American sea captains on the Pacific coast.³ Yet it was they who without question first made a name for themselves doing so. The idea of sailing to the Northwest, via Cape Horn, to acquire furs there to then trade in China originated in accounts of Captain Cook's Third Voyage published by various men; including John Rickman (in 1781), William Ellis (1782), Capt. James King, R.N. (1784), and John Ledyard⁴ (1783) -- all of whom served with Cook. Ledyard, an American who was impressed into British service during the Revolutionary War ended up a Royal Marine serving with Cook's HMS *Resolution* and *Discovery*. His subsequent contribution to U.S. exploration was no little noteworthy, and he was indefatigable in petitioning, among others that could be named, Robert Morris, Thomas Jefferson, John Paul Jones, and Lafayette, as well as later indirectly Barrell and Bulfinch, to undertake an American trade route to the Pacific Northwest by way of the dreaded Cape Horn (the British invariably took the route by way of India, China, and the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii). Although himself unsuccessful in securing palpable support from any of them, he was instrumental in imparting the idea indirectly to others, and thus can be credited for getting started what Kendrick, Gray, and Lewis and Clark finished.

Barrell and his joint Boston investors financed two expeditions: one in 1787-1790, under Kendrick and Gray, and a second for 1790-1793 under Gray alone. In the first of these, two vessels were sent, i.e., the *Columbia*, under Kendrick, and the *Lady Washington*, under Gray. In the second it was Gray alone with the *Columbia*. During the first voyage, and for reasons still not clear, Kendrick and Gray switched ships, and Gray alone after stopping in Hawaii⁵ and China (where sea otters skins were exchanged for tea), circumnavigating the globe, arrived to home, and was as immediately fitted out for the second voyage. Kendrick's story is a peculiar one and fraught with some mystery and suspicion of illicit self-promotion. While we don't have the leisure to quite delve into it all here, he stayed in the Pacific collecting furs and traded in Canton; returning again to the Northwest where he again met up with Gray on the latter's second voyage. At one point in his moving about during this period, Kendrick stopped at Japan, one of the first Americans ever to do so. He was viewed with understandable distrust by the ship owners,

² He also found and is awarded for discovery Gray's Harbor, his namesake, in Washington state.

³ Kendrick had been a privateer captain in the Revolution, and it was later maintained by Gray's widow that the latter had been a captain in the American navy in the same conflict. Though there are no records to properly confirm this, given what we know of Gray the claim is by no means seems implausible as some perhaps are too quick to assume. Alternatively, perhaps he too, like Kendrick, had been a privateer.

⁴ 1751-1789, and nephew of Lieut. Col. William Ledyard who, after a heroic defense of Fort Griswold, Conn., Sept. 6, 1781, was felled there by Arnold's forces; reportedly with his own sword *after* surrendering.

⁵ "Bore off and made sail for the Coast of China, and soon lost sight of these beautiful Isles [Hawaii], The inhabitants of which appear'd to me to be the happiest people in the world. Indeed there was something in them so frank and chearfull that you cou'd not help feeling prepossess'd in their favor." From John Boit's Log for the *Columbia*, Nov. 1, 1792 (second voyage). Howay, p. 419.

and died in a strange accident while in Hawaii; being killed with some others aboard the *Lady Washington* in a ship firing salute.

What follows are some extracts taken from Robert Haswell's log of *Columbia's* first voyage and John Hoskins' narrative of the second as found in the Oregon Historical Society's *Voyages of the Columbia to the Northwest Coast: 1787-1790 & 1790-1793* (1990); ably and well edited by Frederic W. Howay. Spellings, punctuation, and formatting are left and kept as in the originals (though the lacunae notations, i.e., "...", are my own.) In choosing the excerpts I've made a particular point of focusing on the meetings with the natives of the Northwest Coast, and which are both engrossing of themselves and no little illuminating as to Indian customs and character. The Indians, of course, were indispensable in facilitating and making trade possible, as well as necessary in supplying all the explorers, both European and American. Without them it is hard to imagine how Quadra, Vancouver, Gray, and the rest could have got anywhere.

And yet who does and will remember and give any credit to the poor SEA OTTER, and which sent the British and Americans sailors here in droves in search of their furs in the first place?

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“The *Columbia* Attacked by Indians” by painter George Davidson, a member of the second voyage of the *Columbia*. Note the large sized flag; depicted close to or at its actual scale.

From Robert Haswell's Log of the FIRST VOYAGE of the *Columbia*.⁶

[March 1788]

Wednesday 12th. In the Latitude 60° S we found frequent Fogs and at the same time a severe and disagreeable Cold these damps and sprays continually flying over us rendered

⁶ Haswell was originally posted to the *Columbia* under Capt. John Kendrick, but at his own request was early on in the first voyage transferred to the *Lady Washington*, the *Columbia's* consort ship, under Capt. Robert Gray. It is from this ship that he writes.

our duty prodigious hard and fatiguing for ever since our leaving Bretts Harbour the cloths of all our people has been wet. *Monday 17th*. Far more comfortable indeed must there be who are onboard the Ship whose sides are so high that a man is never wet on her decks the winds ever since our coming into lattd. To the southward of Cape Horn the wind has been from WNW to WSW. These Winds have allowed us to gain but little Westing and at this time our prospect of wethering the Cape is unfavourable we have seen several Large Islands of ice and the Weather excessive cold.

Wednesday 19th. In latitude 62° 29' S and Longitude 73° 51' W the winds and weather became more favourable to gaining our passage the Weather was very changeable from Clear and pleasant to snow hail Rain and sleet and that to clear in the space of half an hour – we have the frost intensely hard at certain times and suddenly again a thaw, these changes with the wetness of the Vessel would have been insurmountable in any but a Crew of people whose Constitutions were strong and Vigorous for all their beds and Cloaths to a man were long since drenched with salt water and no opportunity to dry them. 1788. *March. Saturday 22d.* on Saty. 22nd by Acct. I was in Longitude 82° 59' W and by Observation in Latitude 61° 49' W. this situation with a full determination to persevere seemed to insure our passage.

April 1. Tuesday. From this time until the 1 of April we experienced the Greatest variety of weather and by taking the Advantage of every favourable slant of wind we had arrived by account in Latitd. 57° 57' South and Longitude 92° 40' West when between the hours of 4 and 5 in the Morning the Wind suddenly changed from the Northwest to the Southward the Columbia wore Ship and in following her example the Morning being dark we unfortunately lost sight of her the wind increased immoderately fast and threatened what suddenly followed A Violent Gale. The Wind blew heavy a perfect hurricane accompanied with rain hail snow and Sleet with an intense frost the sea immediately [rose] to an immoderate high and frequently threatened us with instant destruction for had the smallest of these Huge overgrown seas struck us it would infallibly have put a period to our existence and they broke with the greatest agitation a very small distance from us it was most fortunate circumstance that the wind was fair and our Sloop scudded exceeding well and suffered no other damage from the sea than having her Larboard Quarter boards stove in April 2. *Wednesday.* On the second it was a little more moderate and hauled more from the westward, but unfortunately for us at 4 AM We Carried away our Jib stay in a sudden squall with the Greatest difficulty we saved the Sail all the next day we lay too. It was now we first materially felt how greatly our hardships had debilitated all the Crew for there was not one sailor onboard who was able to go aloft and take down the Old Jib Stay or fitt a new one and of necessity this duty fell on Mr. Coolidge and myself the wind blew heavy and it hailed with great violence.⁷

[Aug. 1788]

Saturday 2d. On the second at 10 AM to our inexpressible joy we saw the Coast of New Albion [i.e., title bestowed by Sir Francis Drake in 1579 to the coast of California and Oregon] ranging from NNE to SSE distant about 7 Leagues, we tried for soundings in a

⁷ *Voyages of the Columbia to the Northwest Coast: 1787-1790 & 1790-1793*, edited by Frederic W. Howay, pp. 19-21.

hundred fathems without finding bottom we sett a pressing sail in With the Land. I observed in Latt. $41^{\circ} 28'$ N. Sunday the 23 we struck soundings in 50 fathem water over a bottom of fine black sand at this time we were 6 Leagues distant from the Continent at meridian I observed in Latd. $41^{\circ} 38'$ N and Longitude $121^{\circ} 29'$ W.

On Monday the 4th we had a fresh brezes and a pleasant Casriing a press of sail in with the land...at this time we discovered a canoe with ten natives of the Countrey paddling toward us on there nigh approach they made very expressive seigns of friendship.

These were the first inhabtance we have seen here I must add that a regular account of People manners and customs etca. Of this vast coast is a task equell to the skill of an able Historian and what I am totaly inadequate to however as there are some few remarkable occurrences I mention them without rule or form.

These people were in a canoe of a most singular shape it was hued from a tree of vast bulk it was very wide and caried its bredth nearly equell fore and aft its head and stern were but little different boath ending abruptly as flat as a board they rose some inches above the side of the boat in an arch which was neatly worked over with straw of various coulers the boat tho' of the most clumsey shape in the world yet so well was it finished that it looked very pasable there paddles were very rough wrought of ash wood. They were cloathed chiefly in deerskins and they were ornamented with beads of European manufactor.

I am apt to think they have sometimes intercourse with the Spanish at Monteray which is but three or four degrees to the Southward of them they smoak tobacco out of a small wooden tube about the size of a Childs wistle. They had some sweet sented Herbs. The countrey from whence these people came to me appeared the most pleasant I have ever seen the men in the Boat appeared to be well limed people about the middle size there bodies were punctuated in maney forms in all parts.

Capt. Gray made them several preasants but our attent[i]on was called another way the wind by this time b[l]ew a gale. we hove up and stood off shore upon a wind to the westward.

Tuesday 5th...we coasted the shore along but saw no place where there was shelter even for a boat this countrey must be thickly inhabited by the maney fiers we saw in the night and Collums of smoak we would see in the Day time but I think they can derive but little of there subsistance from the sea but to compenciate for this the land was beautyfully divercified with forists and green verdant launs which must give shelter and forage to vast numbers of wild beasts most probable most of the natives on this part of the Coast live on hunting for they most of them live in land this is not the case to the Northward for the face of the Countrey is widly different I was in Latd. $42^{\circ} 3'$ N the Variation $13^{\circ} 50'$ E.

Wednesday 6th. On the 6 favourable brezes and pleasant in the morning about 8 Oclock we were abrest a cove where tolerable good shelter from a Northwardly wind may be had

it is formed by a small bay to the Northward and a little Island to the Southward here wood and water may be procured but what sort of anchorage remains unknown the people were very anxious to come onboard they Paddled after us an amazing distance with great alacrity waving something I suppose skins but we had at this time a good wind and pleas[an]t weather and it was judged best to seek a harbour while within a Quarter of a Mile of a Bould sanday shore in 5 and 6 f[atho]m water above the beach appeared a delightfull Countrey thickly inhabited and Cloathed with woods and verdure with maney Charming streems of water gushing from the vallies most of the inhabitance as we passed there scatered houses fled into the woods while others ran along shore with great swiftness keeping abreast of us maney miles...⁸

[In the vicinity of, probably, Tillamook Bay, Oregon, Aug. 1788]

Saturday 16...Having nothing else to do but wate for the next days tide to depart, Earley in the afternoon I accompaneyed Mr. Coolidge inshore in the long boat to amuse ourselves in taking a walk while our boat was loaded with grass and shrubs for our [live] stock we took all the people in the Boat who were affected by the scurvy our number in all amounted to seven the disposition of the [native] people seemed so friendly we went worse armed than ordinery we had two Muskets and three or four Cutlaces we boath took our swards and each of us a pistol on our first landing we visited there Houses and such victles as they eate themselvs they offered us but they are so intolerable filthy there was nothing we could stumac except the frute.

They then amused us shewing there dexterity with there arrows and spears they then began a war dance It was long and hedious accompaneyed with frightfull howlings indeed there was something more horrid in there song and the jestures which accompanied it than I am capable of Discribing it chilled the bludd in my vains. The dance over we left the natives to themselves and walked along the beach to the boat where the people were cutting grass and only one or two of the Natives with them we went past the boat a little way but within call to a small sand flat in hopes to find some clams while we were digging for these shell fish a young Black man Marcus Lopius a native of the Cape de Verd Islands and who shiped Captain Grays servant at St. Jago's being employed carieng grass down to the boat, had carelessly stuck his Cutlass in the sand one of the natives seeing this took a favourable oppertunity to snatch it at first unobserved and run off with it one of the people observing him before he was quite out of sight called vehemontly thertening to shoot him in hopes he would abandon the stoln goods and make his escape but I had given posative orders to our people not to fier but in cases of the most absolute emergence when for self defence it might be nesecery.

'Twas the hollowing of our people that first roused our attention and we immediately flew to know the cause, we were informed of the circumstance adding that the Black boy had followed him in spite of everything they could say to the contrary.

I was struck by the daingerous situation the ladd was in and feared its consequences doubting of there being a posability of saving him from the impending danger, but resolving no projects should go untried without hesitation ordering the boat to keep abrest

⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 28-31.

of us we ran toward the village we met several Chiefs persons whose friendship we had taken every opportunity to obtain by kind usage and presents. Indeed it seemed before this period we had fully effected it to these people Mr. Coolidge offered several articles to them of great value to bring back the man unhurt, this they refused intimating their wish for us to seek him ourselves. I now remarked to Mr. Coolidge that all the natives we saw were unusually well armed having with them their arrows and spears however we proceeded still further and on turning a clump of trees that obstructed our prospect the first thing which presented itself to our view was the poor black with the thief by the collar loudly calling for assistance saying he had caught the thief, when we were observed by the main body of Natives to hastily approach them they instantly drenched their knives and spears with savage fury in the body of the unfortunate youth. He quit his hold and stumbled but rose again and staggered toward us but having a flight of arrows thrown into his back and he fell within fifteen yards of me and instantly expired while they mangled his lifeless corse.

We were now by our passing a number whom as I remarked before we supposed to be our friends situated between two formidable parties. Those we had passed being reinforced by a great number from the woods gave us the first salutation by a shower of arrows. Our only method was to get to the boat as fast as possible for this purpose we turned leaving the dead body; for it would have been the height of imprudence as our Number was so small to have attempted its rescue we made the best of our way for the Boat assaulted on all sides by showers of arrows and spears --- and at length it became necessary to shoot their most daring ringleader which I did with my pistol. Mr. Coolidge and one man who was with us followed my example and Mr. Coolidge ordered those who were in the boat to fire and cover us as we waded off for the boat could not come within considerable distance of the shore. But undaunted by the fate of their Companions they followed us up to the middle in the water and slightly wounded both Mr. Coolidge and myself in the hand and totally disabled the person who was with us on shore who fainting with loss of blood lay lifeless several hours and continued to bleed a torrent till the barb of the arrow was extracted, we jumped into the Boat and pushed off and were soon out of arrow shot when we found this they launched their Canoes intending to cut us off indeed they were well situated for it but some were timid some were bold and not half paddled but keeping a constant fire from the boat they came fairly within arrow shot before we were nigh into the sloop, and they returned towards the shore as soon as we got onboard we discharged two or three swivel shot at them and in a few moments not one Canoe was to be seen all having fled, during the whole of the night it was dismal to hear the hoops and howlings of the natives they had fires on the beach near the spot where the ladd was killed and we could see the great number of them passing to and fro before the blaze...⁹

[At Clayoquot Bay, Vancouver Island, March 1789]

We were all the time in this Harbour on the most friendly footing with the natives who discovered a very good disposition. The natives whose disposition manners and Customs exactly resemble those of Nootka [Sound, Vancouver Island] are a stouter better proportioned people.

⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 36-39.

Their Towns are larger and much more numerously inhabited than those of the Sound they are better built. And are cleaner their Clumas or carved pillars [totem poles] are more numerous and better executed some of these so large that the Mouth serves as a doorway into their houses some of their ridgpools which are of incredible Length and bulk are neatly Fluted others are painted in resemblance of various sorts of beats and birds we met with resemblances of the Sun both painted and carved the rays shoot from every side of the orb which like our Country Sign painters they pictur with eyes nose and mouth and a round plump face...¹⁰

From John Hoskins Narrative of the SECOND VOYAGE of the *Columbia*.

[late August 1791]

At noon the westernmost Island off Pintard's sound bore north west six leagues distance and the south extreme of the Continent east by south my latitude by observation 50° 35' north and longitude 129° 20' west at seven in the evening the wind veered to the east south east when we [the *Columbia* under Capt. Robert Gray] stood on our tacks to the southward we had an abundance of whales playing about the ship and through the night much sharp lightning in the southeast.¹¹

[late Aug. 1791 entry]

Captain Kendrick [with the *Lady Washington* and acting independently of the *Columbia* now under Capt. Gray] arrived on the 13th of June in latitude 52° 58' north he went into Barrell's Sound where his vessel a few days after his arrival was attacked and actually in possession of the natives nearly an hour when he again recovered his vessel killed and wounded a great many among the rest a woman who was a proper amazon. This he attributes to the following cause soon after he sent the *Columbia* on to China [in and towards completion of the first voyage to the Pacific Northwest] he sailed from Clioquot for Washington's Islands [the Queen Charlotte Islands] and went into Barrell's Sound having been there a short time the natives found means to steal his linen etca. That had been washed this with some other things they had at times robbed him of induced him to take the two Chiefs Coyah and Schulkinanse he dismounted one of his cannon and put one leg of each into the carriage where the arms of the cannon rest and fastened down the clamps threatening at the same time if they did not restore the stolen goods to kill them nearly all the goods were soon returned what was not he made them pay for in skins as this was a means though contrary to his wishes of breaking friendship with them and well knowing if he let those Chiefs go they would sell him no more skins he therefore made them fetch him all their skins and paid them the same price he had done for those before purchased when they had no more the two Chiefs were set at liberty when he went into the Sound this time the natives appeared to be quite friendly and brought skins for sale as usual the day of the attack there was an extraordinary number of visitors several Chiefs being aboard the arms chest were on the quarter deck with the keys in them the gunners

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 69.

¹¹ *Ibid.* p. 238.

having been overhauling the arms the Chiefs got on these chest and tok the keys out when Coyah tauntingly said to Captain Kendrick pointing to his legs at the same time now put me in your gun carriage the vessel was immediately thronged with natives a woman standing in the main chains urging them on the officers and people all retired below having no arms but what was in possession of the natives save the officers private ones Captain Hendrick tarried on deck endeavoring to pacify the natives and bring them to some terms at the same time edging towards the companion way to secure his retreat to the cabin a fellow all the time holding a huge marling spike he had stolen fixed into a stick over his head ready to strike the deadly blow whenever orders should be given the other natives with their daggers grasped and only waiting for the word to be given to begin a most savage massacree just as Captain Hendrick had reached the companion way Coyah jumpt down and he immediately jumpt on top of him Coyah then made a pass at him with his dagger but it luckily only went through his jacket and scratched his belly the officers by this time had their arms in readiness and would have ventured on deck before but for fear of killing their Captain. Captain Kendrick now fired a musket from the cabin then took a pair of pistols and another musket and went on deck being followed by his officers with the remainder of the arms they had collected the natives on seeing this made a precipitate retreat all but the woman before mentioned in the chains who there continued urging them to action with the greatest ardour until the last moment though her arm had been previously cut off[f] by one of the people with a hanger and she was otherways much wounded when she quitted all the natives had left the vessel and she jumpt over board and attempted to swim of but was afterwards shot though the natives had taken the keys of the arms chests yet they did not happen to be lockt they were therefore immediately opened and a constant fire was kept up as long as they could reach the natives with cannon or small arms after which they chased them in their armed boats making the most dreadful havock by killing all they came across this accounts for the story the natives told us when we were there...¹²

[Sept. 1791]

At four on the morning of the 15th it was cloudy with a large swell setting on shore the land now made its appearance about five leagues distance and it was known to be Cape Flattery at five a light breeze sprang up from the eastward stood in for the land steering north east at eight Tootooch's island bore north north east four miles distance the extremes of the land to the southward bore south by east at nine there being a strong tide against us we cast anchor before the village Ahshewat in twenty five fathom water over a muddy bottom Tootooch's Island bearing north one league distance several of the natives visited us with skins which were purchased among others was a Chief named Clahclacko who from what I could understand wished to inform me the Spaniards had been here since us endeavoring to convert them to christianity that he and several others had been baptized as also several of their children this ceremony he went through as also the chanting of some of their hymns with a most serious religious air though it was in broken Spanish and indian yet he imitated the sounds of their voices their motions and religious cants of their faces to a miracle at the same time condemned our irreligious manner of life.¹³

¹² *Ibid.* pp. 240-241.

¹³ *Ibid.* p. 245.

[Oct. 1791]

The 16th I went out in a canoe which Captain Kendrick purchased of the natives and made me a present of shooting I left the ship [*Columbia*] early with an intention of seeing the village of Okerminna [in Clayoquot Sound] it was noon before I arrived at Inistuck which must be at least ten or twelve miles from the ship I proceeded a few miles beyond this when seeing nothing of the village and finding if I went farther it would be very late before I could reach the ship which would give an unnecessary alarm I returned to Inistuck before which is a clever snug cove in which there were many geese, ducks and teal sporting here I landed in order to get a shot at them one of the people that was with me who also landed in creeping along the edge of the bush saw an animal which I conceiv'd to be an alligator the man was so agitated as not to be able to give any description of what he had seen than that it was a huge animal very long with a large mouth and teeth the neck about as thick as his thigh and so tapered of to the tail with a black back and light yellow belly I immediately repaired to the place where this animal had been seen but could not get a sight of him from this circumstance I was induced to think it was only a burnt log (of which there are many about here) which the man's imagination had formed into a most frightful monster I have since informed the natives of what was seen who inform me there is an animal which from the description of them as they are painted on their canoes as also one they drew with chalk on board the ship as they are pretty good imitators can't be far from the thing and are very different from the alligators found in the southern parts of our side of America these having a long sharp head something like a hound with a good set of teeth the rest of the body in every other respect like a serpent it is called by the natives a Hieclick¹⁴ and by them much revered they tell me this animal is very scarce and seldom to be seen living principally in the woods they offered me twenty skins if I would procure them one for they have such a superstitious idea that if they should have but the least piece of this animal in their boat they are sure to kill a whale which among them is deemed one of the greatest honors indeed a piece of this magic animal insures success at all times and on all occasions.¹⁵

[Dec. 1791]

...At the earnest solicitation of a number of the Chiefs I on the 22nd (of the month) accompanied Captain Gray to the village of Opitsitah [in Clayoquot Sound] to see Yekian the youngest brother of Wickananish we were received at the beach by a Chief with about forty young men who conducted us to the house of the sickman chanting an agreeable though solemn air as we went and making our arrival known to every one in the avenue to the house we were greeted by a number of the populace who had assembled on the occasion on entering the house we were received by Wickananish who presented us to his father and mother they received us with the most cordial affection and said or seemed to say save the life of my son and restore him to health who until now we had not seen having been obscur'd by six stout men who are a set of priests and doctors that do every thing by m[a]gic some of these were pressing in his belly and breast others

¹⁴ Editor Howay avers, though exactly with what degree of certainty we are free to guess, "The animal was created by vivid Indian imagination."

¹⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 249-250.

sucking his throat making at times a most hideous noise which is answered by the voices of a great multitude that had thronged the house now and then those men would pretend to scoop something up (as though it was water) with their two hands and then blow it [a]way thus those men would continue to press and feel about the young man's body till they pretendedly would get hold of the evil spirit that was the cause of all his malady then seize on him as before mentioned and blow him away.

The sickman was laid on a board with mats stripped perfectly naked he appeared to be much emaciated those men had workt him into a high fever and he had a pain in his bowels and lmb's as we had judg'd the young man wanted nourishment so it was we had therefore brought him down some fowl soup and our servant made him some panado, boiled some rice, etca., etca. We then left him though not until both he and his father made us his promise a daily visit we were frequently asked both by him his father and several of other of the chiefs if we thought he would die they were answered in the negative provided those [medicine] men were not allowed to press him any more which was promised should be the case.

The cause of this young man's illness is an excess of grief at the loss of his only child which died a few months since this he took so much to heart as scarce to be persuaded by his friends to receive sustenance sufficient to keep him alive add to this about three weeks since he visited us at the ship on his return he caught a bad cold and he will ere long in all human probability fall a sacrifice to his immoderate grief such is the affection of people who we deem savages to their children.¹⁶

[Jan. 1792]

I now left the Chiefs and went to Wickananish's house where I was introduced to several Nootka chiefs from this I went to see several other houses being importuned by the Chief of every house to visit him for scarce would they let me pass their house without entering every where I found them dressing they would first go bath and wash in the salt water afterwards wash themselves in freshwater then wipe dry the women would then rub their faces with deers tallow which they would heat by chewing then paint and oil their bodies and dressing their hair in various fashions I was pleased to see the attention these females paid to their husbands who seemed to vie with each other whose should be best decorated.

About ten o'clock they began their dancing and musick when Tootiscoosettle came and desired me to stay with him he being lame did not join them telling me if I mixt in with the mob very probably I might be insulted which he should be the more sorry for as the persons would not be known therefore it would not be in his power to punish them.

They came along the beach very slow singing and dancing to the exactest time sometimes two or three chiefs dancing from one end to the other on the shoulders of the company Wickananish himself marching in front from right to left ordering the danc'ers there were four women on each who served as musicians they having a copper machine with pebble stones in it which they rattled and sang at the same time finally the company

¹⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 254-255.

arrived opposite the house of young Wickananish being at least here quarters of an hour coming not a quarter of a mile where they gave a genteel dance then rushed up the passage one by one Tootoocheetticus leading the way I suppose there were about two hundred in this company after the principal part of them had got in I entered with Tootiscoosettle who placed me on a good seat on one side and Mr. Boit on the other side of him the house was clean and neatly decorated with the branches of spruce and fir a number of other natives now entered the house to assist in singing who were placed round in two rows having a board placed before them and a small stick given for each for to strike on it no women or strangers were admitted to be actors in the company but those women who acted as musicians before mentioned how many there were in the house that sung I know not but should suppose nearly six hundred besides there were nearly twice as many who stood without and were spectators.

After a short respite they began to sing at the same time shaking their rattles and striking on those boards with their sticks which though a harsh confused noise was to the exactest time and by no means unpleasing after singing several songs in came two men with a couple of bundles of laths on their shoulders the outer ends all in a blaze they run round and round several times before the company skipping and hollowing which was answered with loud laughs from the whole company then they laid them down in the middle of the room and went and fetch'd more with some large billets of pine wood and made a great fire they then again began to sing and after singing several more songs they began to dance which they did by squatting on their hams and jumping to the musick round the fire frequently whirling round two or three times in the air after singing and dancing two or three more tunes the scene closed with a frantic dance jumping and catching hold of their peoples garments or flesh Tootoocheetticus caught hold of one fellows cootsack who sat at my feet with his teeth making a jump with a whirl at the same time and tore it in too [sic] after this they all dispersed.

To describe their various dresses would fill a volume scarce any two being alike the principal part had their bodies painted of a dead red their faces variously some of a shining black others red, others white again others black and white or black red and white variegated according to fancy etca. Their heads as various as their faces in general they were incrustated with grease and paint strewed with down and dressed out with small branches of the cypress and the long feathers of the eagles tails stuck up on top of their heads they wore a garment which was tied around their waist and hung as low as their knees which hung to the ground and another bow of the same sort tied round the thick of the arm again others with dresses quite the reverse taking the whole together they formed the most savage grotesque appearance I ever beheld.

We were invited by Tootoocheetticus to take dinner with him which we did on clams and fish which were both boiled and roasted after dinner we went to Tootiscoosettles to whom I expressed my wish of returning he immediately ordered a boat to be got ready and manned we then paid each of the Chiefs another visit and taking our leaves left them.

While we tarried at Opitsitah we were treated with the greatest politeness and attention by all ranks of people every one seeming to make it his study to render our situation agreeable and happy but none more so than our friend Tootiscoosettle who immediately on my arrival appointed two men to wait and tend upon me these people conducted me wherever I chose to go preeceeding me and proclaiming who was a coming.¹⁷

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¹⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 262-264.